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ECONOMIC GROWTH

(Energy and Environment)

USAID turns over work plan for water program

The United States Assistance for International Development (USAID) yesterday turned over a work plan for Metropolitan Cebu Water District for the implementation of a program that would ensure safe drinking water for the Cebuanos.

U.S. Ambassador Kristie Kenny said the USAID has funded a study on the septage management and it is now up to the MCWD to implement the project.

In her speech, Kenny said they find it necessary to implement such kind of project because a lot of people die everyday because of lack of clean water.

“We should pay attention to our environment and take care of our water for our children,” she emphasized.

Kenny said the USAID has given MCWD a grant through a \$10,000 feasibility study on the management of septic wastes in Cebu City.

Armando Paredes, MCWD general manager, said they would use the result of the study to implement a pilot septage system in the city. If the project succeeds, the USAID may implement it also in other parts of the country.

With the project, he explained that the wastes from septic tanks would no longer be disposed in creeks or rivers but would be treated in a septage facility.

“Wastes from septic tanks are becoming threat to our groundwater sources. They can contaminate our water supply if they leak into our groundwater aquifers,” Paredes said.

According to him, they are expecting to start the implementation of the project this year because USAID is aiming to finish the study soon.

Aside from the turnover of the work plan, Kenny, officials of MCWD and city officials led by Vice Mayor Michael Rama also taught the children the proper way of hand washing.

This is in line with this year’s celebration of the international year of sanitation and the water sanitation and hygiene program of the USAID.

“By teaching children proper sanitation, we are making the population healthier,” Kenny said.

The turnover of the work plan and hand washing ceremony was held at the Rizal Park in front of the Cebu City Hall. - Wenna A. Berondo/LPM

(Source: The Freeman Cebu Newspaper, 4/11/08, page 6)